



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

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<b>Location:</b>	LEHI, UT	<b>Accident Number:</b>	SEA96FA036
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	01/01/1996, 1815 MST	<b>Registration:</b>	N8870W
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-28-235	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

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## Analysis

The instrument-rated commercial pilot received a weather briefing for a VFR cross-country flight. The briefer described deteriorating VFR conditions along the pilot's route of flight, and the pilot elected not to file an IFR flight plan. The pilot departed on the flight and encountered dark night conditions in mountainous terrain near his destination. Lowering cloud ceilings and blowing snow were reported in the vicinity of the accident site about the time of the accident. The airplane impacted mountainous terrain near the top of a ridge about 20 miles from the intended destination. Radar data showed that the airplane had entered a climbing turn and was climbing through about 5000 feet msl when the last radar return was recorded. Elevation of the crash site was about 5000 feet. No distress calls or communications to ATC were made by the pilot, and no preimpact mechanical malfunction was found.

## Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: continued VFR flight by the pilot into instrument meteorological conditions (IMC), and his failure to maintain sufficient altitude and/or clearance from mountainous terrain. Factors relating to the accident were: darkness, low ceiling, and snow.

## Findings

Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT ENCOUNTER WITH WEATHER  
Phase of Operation: CRUISE

### Findings

1. (F) LIGHT CONDITION - DARK NIGHT
  2. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
  3. (F) WEATHER CONDITION - SNOW
  4. (C) VFR FLIGHT INTO IMC - CONTINUED - PILOT IN COMMAND
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Occurrence #2: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: MANEUVERING

### Findings

5. TERRAIN CONDITION - MOUNTAINOUS/HILLY
6. (C) ALTITUDE/CLEARANCE - NOT MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Flight Instructor; Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	63
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane Multi-engine; Airplane Single-engine; Instrument Airplane
<b>Flight Time:</b>	4904 hours (Total, all aircraft), 227 hours (Total, this make and model), 4789 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N8870W
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-28-235 PA-28-235	<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Operator:</b>	STUBBS, LARRY	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-540-B4B5
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Instrument Conditions	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Night/Dark
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	, 0 ft msl	<b>Weather Information Source:</b>	Witness
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Unknown / 0 ft agl	<b>Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:</b>	7 knots / , 300°
<b>Temperature:</b>	1° C	<b>Visibility</b>	0 Miles
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>			
<b>Departure Point:</b>	ST GEORGE, UT (SGU)	<b>Destination:</b>	WEST JORDON, UT (U42)

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Destroyed
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>			

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	JEFFREY B GUZZETTI	<b>Adopted Date:</b>	12/10/1996
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at <a href="mailto:pubin@ntsb.gov">pubin@ntsb.gov</a> , or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/</a> .		

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